



**Site Visit Programmatic Questions
Positive Alternatives 2016**

1. Update/ Demographic Reporting

- Review your two most recently submitted Update/Demographic Reports: are you meeting Report Count Goals?
Yes, Epiphany Caring for Life has been meeting and exceeding all program goals.
- Note any significant differences between the reports: are your programs stable? Improving? What do the reports indicate about progress in your programs?
ECL has increased programming since the beginning of the PA grant cycle including year 3 and 4 of the grant cycle.
- Any questions on the recording of data on either form?
We did discuss the recording of the services provided by the hotline. It appeared that not all the calls that are being made to the hotline are being recorded as services provided.

2. Work Plan

- Review your 2012-16 grant application's description of the program you requested to be funded. Note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
- Please prepare a **short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** Address these topics:
 - a. How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing?
 - b. Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed?
 - c. Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased in the 4th year?
 - d. Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?

**EPIPHANY CARING FOR LIFE
SUMMARY: SITE VISIT JUNE 2016**

Epiphany Caring for Life (ECL) has operated as a non-profit providing alternatives to abortion in Anoka County since January, 1997. Over the past 18 years, our mission has been to support, empower, and assist women in carrying their pregnancies to term and promoting healthy families. As outlined in our 2012-2016 Positive Alternative grant applications, we continue to provide four main programs to support pregnant women and women with infants from diverse backgrounds, with a large portion being single parents and women of color. Those programs include the 24 hour care line, maternity closet material support, companion mentor program, and baby bed and car seat program. We also continue to network with other

community organizations to assist clients in obtaining services to fill unmet needs. ECL works especially closely with Anoka County Public Health Nurses, Anoka-Hennepin District school social workers, and Alexandra House Domestic Abuse Shelter Advocates.

Our program has continued to grow since 2012 and we are consistently servicing more clients than projected, providing services to approximately 500 families each year. In the fall of 2015 we had an increased number of requests for services and added an additional two to four client appointments each week. On average, we speak with up to 125 women per quarter on the 24 hour care line, providing referrals, scheduling maternity closet visits, offering emotional support, and educating women on adoption and parenting resources. At the maternity closet, we serve an average of 50 clients per quarter providing necessary service referrals and material support. Over 200 clients have received nutrition support through baby food, formula, or cub food gift cards. We also continue to provide more intensive longer term support, such as emotional support, budgeting support and goal setting, for two to four clients per quarter through the client service advocate and our companions. The number of clients served in the 4th year of the current PA grant has increased since 2012 and remained stable since year three.

Additionally, through networking and outreach both our baby bed and car seat program are becoming increasingly well-known and providing a much needed service in the community. Through these programs, we have distributed 166 pack n plays and 54 car seats since 2012. The ECL car seat program and a support assistant position to manage financial application screening were both added to our program as part of our 2012 Positive Alternatives grant. The car seat program became active in July of 2013 after we organized a local car seat technician training so we could begin distribution as quickly as possible and has been very successful. We also have expanded networking with Anoka county churches and pro-life groups, as well as renewing efforts to work with Epiphany school PTO and afterschool programs.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Minnesota of Department of Health to serve the Anoka County families. In the future, we will be adding a new mother's gift bag program to promote bonding early in the pregnancy and an application help program to help clients fill out applications necessary to receive assistance.

3. Fiscal Review

- Review of the 2015-16 expenditures spreadsheet sent by Ellen Heit.
The accounting for ECL is in agreement with the numbers given by MDH financial management.
- Have you revised your 2015-16 budget justification?
Yes, this spring and it has been approved.
- Any questions on your completion of the 2014-16 grant and your budget?

4. Do you have any questions on the findings from your **Financial Reconciliation**?

The Financial Reconciliation was conducted last year and there were not significant findings.

5. Grant Closeout Form

- You will have an opportunity to review a draft of the Grant Closeout Form.

6. 2015-16 Evaluation - Due June 10th

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Plan will be discussed. Any suggestions provided in your 2013-14 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing the same evaluation.

The topic for the evaluation plan for this year was cars seat safety. This year ECL was able to use a car seat doll to demonstrate correct use of securing an infant in a car seat. Staff were encouraged by the use of the hands on model. The evaluation report has already been submitted.

- Any questions on the expectations of the report or your organization's evaluation plan for 2015-16?

No, not at this time.

7. Positive Alternatives website

- The PA website will be reconfigured once contracts are all signed.
- Resources for grantees will remain basically the same.
- WRTK booklet revisions have not yet been completed.

Both the PA website page and the WRTK booklet are in the process of being updated.

8. Grant Manager Updates

The current grant cycle is operating on a 2 year budget cycle. As a reminder, the new grant cycle, 2016-19, will run yearly budgets. The PA policies are in the process of being updated. The newly revised policies will be made available in the new grant cycle. A webinar will be offered by WebEx for all PA grantee staff on Thursday, July 14th, in the morning. All grantees and their staff are welcome to attend. More information will be sent out soon.

9. Issues specific to this grantee

A question was asked about benefits (401 K) that will need to be included in the new grant cycle. A discussion on how to include these funds included using a percentage to represent the cost of this required benefit to all PA employees.

10. Facility

- If your facility has been remodeled or updated please give an update. Do you have any plans to move your organization to another building in the near future?

ECL would like to move closer to the parish offices for easier access for their clients.

The parish they are affiliated with is in the process of making long range plans that will help facilitate this change. However, no concrete plans are in the works at this time.

- If grant-funded activity areas have been significantly altered, be prepared to discuss.

11. Health Equity is a priority goal at the Minnesota Department of Health. How is your organization addressing this need?

ECL has been offering services at no cost to all women who are in need of services since they opened their doors. They do not turn anyone away. If they cannot provide the services needed they will make a referral to a community agency for their clients.

12. What are the new **unaddressed needs in the communities you serve?**

Affordable housing is the biggest problem in Anoka County. Without the client having a domestic violence claim, housing is extremely hard to find. Rental assistance is also hard to qualify for. A local program called Family Promises that provides temporary housing is always full.

- Do you have a well-developed and up-to-date list of community partners available? ECL is well connected to area resources. They especially have a good working relationship with the county public health nurses and receive many referrals from them.

- Are you able to make warm referrals to any of these partners?

Yes, ECL knows their community partners and are able to make referrals confidently. The hardest area to find community help with is transportation for clients. Anoka County lacks reliable transportation help for those in need.

13. Clients stories (along with client data collection) are an important component of the work we do. Client stories fill in the gaps that data can't detail and humanize the efforts made by all grantees.

- **Have you submitted your PA funded client stories yet?**

Yes, they have submitted their client stories. Thank you.

14. How can MDH be more supportive of your program?

Help with providing or arranging reliable and ongoing car seat training required by the state for those organizations that distribute car seats would be appreciated.

15. Other?

Epiphany Caring for Life has been a long time PA grantee providing much needed services to marginalized women in unplanned or crisis pregnancy situations in the Coon Rapids area of Minnesota. They provide resources such as material assistance and warm referrals for their clients to help support their decision to parent their child. This grantee makes a great effort in forming community partnerships with other like-minded agencies that are able to fill in the gaps for the services their clients may need. Staff are knowledgeable and compassionate in providing for the needs of their clients making it is easy to see why this grantee has had continuing success with providing for the needs of their community for women in unplanned pregnancy situations.

Site Visit Date: June 3, 2016

Center: Epiphany Caring for Life

Grantee Staff: Kathy Beyer, Jessica Whitehead

Positive Alternatives Grant Manager: Mary Ottman